

IN THE CLAIMS:

1 1. – 9. (Cancelled)

1 10. (Previously Presented) A method for maintaining a set of data paths accessible by a
2 set of upper level services of a storage operating system of a computer, the method com-
3 prising the steps of:

4 creating a device instance associated with a storage device;

5 creating a first path instance distinct from the device instance, where the first path
6 instance is associated with a first path to the storage device;

7 creating, in response to events identifying an addition of a path, an additional path
8 instance associated with an additional path to the storage device, where the additional
9 path is distinct from the device instance; and

10 deleting, in response to events identifying a removal of a path, a path instance as-
11 sociated with the removed path.

1 11. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the step of creating a device instance oc-
2 curs in response to receipt of an event identifying an addition of a storage device.

1 12. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the events identifying an addition of a
2 path is a Fibre Channel loop initialization event.

1 13. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the events identifying removal of a path is
2 a Fibre Channel loop initialization event.

1 14. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the step of creating an additional path in-
2 stance further comprises the step of linking the additional path instance to a linked list of
3 path instances associated with the storage device.

1 15. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the device instance and path instances are
2 accessible via an application program interface.

1 16. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the set of upper level services further
2 comprises a redundant array of inexpensive disks layer of the storage operating system.

1 17. – 22. (Cancelled)

1 23. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium, including program instructions
2 executing on a computer, for maintaining a set of data paths accessible by a set of upper
3 level services of a storage operating system, the program instructions including steps for:
4 creating a device instance associated with a storage device;
5 creating a first path instance distinct from the device instance, where the first path
6 instance is associated with a first path to the storage device;
7 creating, in response to events identifying an addition of a path, an additional path
8 instance associated with an additional path to the storage device, where the additional
9 path is distinct from the device instance; and
10 deleting, in response to events identifying a removal of a path, a path instance as-
11 sociated with the removed path.

1 24. (Cancelled)

1 25. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 4 10 further comprising:
2 dynamically generating the set of data paths in response to a storage device event.

1 26. (Cancelled)

1 27. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 10 further comprising:
2 selecting, as the first data path, a last used data path associated with the storage
3 device.

1 28. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 10 further comprising:
2 performing the input/output operation to a disk drive as the storage device.

1 29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28 further comprising:
2 interconnecting the computer with the disk drive by a Fibre Channel Loop.

1 30. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 10 further comprising:
2 performing the input/output operation from a file server as the computer.

1 31. – 50. (Cancelled)

1 Please add new claim 51.

1 51. (New) An apparatus for maintaining a set of data paths accessible by a set of upper
2 level services of a storage operating system of a computer, comprising:
3 means for creating a device instance associated with a storage device;
4 means for creating a first path instance distinct from the device instance, where
5 the first path instance is associated with a first path to the storage device;
6 means for creating, in response to events identifying an addition of a path, an ad-
7 ditional path instance associated with an additional path to the storage device, where the
8 additional path is distinct from the device instance; and
9 means for deleting, in response to events identifying a removal of a path, a path
10 instance associated with the removed path.